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READY TO LAUNCH FIRST UNCREWED GAGANYAAN MISSION ANYTIME: ISRO

Isro chairman V Narayanan said on Wednesday the space agency is fully prepared to launch the first of the three uncrewed missions any time

OVER 80,000 TESTS COMPLETED: V NARAYANAN

Narayanan said that with 80,000 tests completed, about 85% of the work on the Gaganyaan mission is now done. The first uncrewed Gaganyaan mission is scheduled for December 2025 and will carry the humanoid robot Vyommitra. It will be the first of three uncrewed tests designed to validate the mission's systems before the crewed launch

LAUNCH IN DECEMBER, PM TO FINALISE DATE

- The launch date for the first uncrewed mission will be finalised by the Prime Minister, Narayanan said at the Bengaluru Tech Summit 2025
- The Isro chairman said India's share in the global space economy is expected to rise to 11% by 2047, from the current 2%. He added Isro will launch around 50 satellites per year over the next five years | P2

2027

WHEN INDIA AIMS TO LAUNCH THE FIRST CREWED GANGANYAAN MISSION

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Another form of talaq now under top court's glare

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY
@ New Delhi

EIGHT years after it deemed instant triple *talaq* (*talaq-e-biddah*) unconstitutional, the Supreme Court on Wednesday indicated it could go after *talaq* staggered over three months (*talaq-e-hasan*) — a form of divorce — by sending the matter to a five-member bench.

Under *talaq-e-hasan*, a Muslim man can divorce his wife by uttering the word *talaq* once each for three months.

A three-judge bench led by Justice Surya Kant was hearing a petition by journalist Benazeer Heena, who said her husband Ghulam Akhtar had sent unsigned *talaq-e-hasan* notices through his lawyer by Speed Post. "In the 11-page *talaq* notice, the sign of the husband is missing. *Talaq* was pronounced by the husband's advocate," her counsel said.

In the absence of Akhtar's signature, Heena has been unable to prove she is divorced, though he remarried. But if she is to wed again, Akhtar could accuse her of polyandry. Heena also had problems with her child's school admission.

Akhtar's advocate said the practice of conveying *talaq* through legal notice was quite common in Islam.

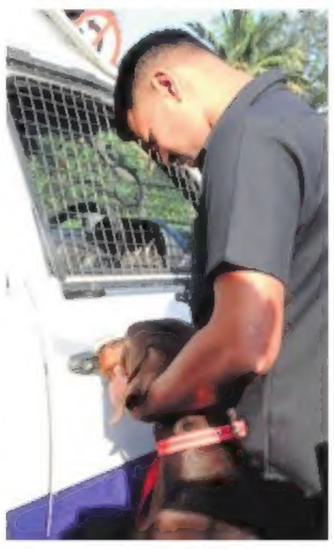
"How is this allowed in modern society?" the bench that included justices Ujjal Bhuyan, and N K Singh wondered. "We are in 2025. How are you promoting this? Is this how the dignity of a woman is upheld? Should a civilised society allow this kind of practice?" justice Surya Kant asked.

The bench went on to observe, "Society at large is involved. Some remedial measures have to be taken. If there are gross discriminatory practices, this court will have to interfere."

The court indicated that if required it could refer the matter to a five-member bench for consideration. "Give us broadly the legal questions that may arise. Then we will see how to resolve them," the bench said.

Regulation as per constitutional ethos

The bench said it is not the question of striking down a prevalent religious practice but an issue which needs to be regulated as per the constitutional ethos. Heena's PIL was directed to be listed on Nov 26, Constitution Day



A sniffer dog goes to work on the cash-in-transit vehicle after the robbery in Bengaluru on Wednesday | EXPRESS

Posing as RBI officials, gang robs ₹7cr

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

IN a daring heist executed in broad daylight in Bengaluru on Wednesday afternoon, five to six criminals, posing as Reserve Bank of India (RBI) officials, intercepted a cash-in-transit vehicle (CITV) carrying Rs 7.11 crore and escaped with the money after abandoning the vehicle and its four staff members. The four staff members of the money transfer operator company have been taken into custody, suspecting their involvement.

The heist took place around 12.30 pm near Jayanagar's Ashoka Pillar. The suspects, travelling in an SUV, intercepted the cash vehicle (GJ-01-HT-9173) from Cash Management Services (CMS) company. Claiming to be RBI officials, they told the staff that they needed to verify cash that was being transported in the company vehicle. They took three staff members to their vehicle, leaving the driver back in the cash van.

The miscreants then instructed the driver to drive the CITV towards the Dairy Circle flyover. There, they allegedly threatened him with a pistol, unloaded the cash along with the Digital Video Recorder (DVR) installed in the van and fled from the spot. The driver alerted the CMS security head, who in turn informed the police. The van had collected Rs 7.11 crore from a private bank in JP Nagar and was heading towards HBR Layout, with multiple scheduled ATM stops to deposit the cash. The four CMS staff members on board were identified as Binod Kumar (driver), Rajanna and Thammayya (armed guards), and Aftab (cash custodian), the police said.

A senior police officer said the Scene of Crime Officer (SOCO) and Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) teams inspected the van and lifted fingerprints. The four staff members of CMS have been taken into custody for questioning, while CCTV footage too is being analysed, he added.

The police strongly suspect the involvement of an insider, who might have passed critical information about the movement of the cash van. "The statements of the driver and the three staff members have been inconsistent, raising suspicion" the officer said. The three staff members, who were taken by the criminals in their vehicle, were dropped off in Jayanagar, but they did not alert their company or anyone else after their release, the officer said. CONTINUED ON: P3

US deports 200 Indians, including Anmol Bishnoi

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

A special US deportation flight carrying 200 Indians, including Anmol Bishnoi, the younger brother and close aide of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, two other fugitives wanted in Punjab, and 197 undocumented migrants landed in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Anmol is wanted in multiple criminal cases in India, including the murders of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala in May 2022 and Nationalist Congress Party leader Baba Siddique in October 2024, and firing at actor Shah Rukh Khan's residence in April 2024.

As soon as the special US flight landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, Bishnoi was detained by the National Investigation Agency (NIA). He was later produced at Delhi's Patiala House court, which sent him to 11 days NIA custody.

Anmol Bishnoi

"We are trying to find how he fled India," Special Public Prosecutor Rahul Tyagi said, adding that Anmol will be produced before the court again on November 29 after completion of his NIA custody.

Hailing from Punjab's Fazilka, Anmol was his borther Lawrence Bishnoi's principal overseas handler and was directing extortion rackets, issuing threats, and coordinating assignments through encrypted channels.

Anmol reportedly slipped out of the country in April 2022 using a forged passport, accompanied by another wanted gangster Sachin Thapan.

ED gets 13-day custody of Al Falah chief

Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui

Family property in MP get notice

Order to raze illegal constructions there in 3 days

SUMIT KUMAR, FAYAZ WANI & NAMITA BAJPAI
@ New Delhi/ Srinagar/ Lucknow

THE Enforcement Directorate (ED), which is investigating the Al Falah group at the centre of the Delhi blast case for alleged money laundering, has uncovered tainted funds amounting to ₹415 crore, sources said on Wednesday. The agency has secured 13-day custody of Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui, the chairman and founder of the group. An official said the Al Falah group generated "proceeds of crime" by deceiving students through false claims about the accreditation and recognition of its institutions. Meanwhile, sources said around 10 people associated with the Al-Falah University, including three from Kashmir, are missing. Their mobile phones too are switched off. Their disappearances came to light after a joint operation by the J&K and Haryana police.

In J&K, the police on Wednesday inspected lockers belonging to doctors in the Valley.

In Uttar Pradesh, the state Anti-Terrorist Squad launched a comprehensive information-gathering exercise across eight districts, seeking detailed records of all students, teachers and management personnel associated with all operational madrasas.

NITISH
TO TAKE OATH AS BIHAR CM TODAY
The swearing-in ceremony will be held at Patna's Gandhi Maidan. Over 3 lakh people expected to attend
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EXPRESS READ

DKS hints at stepping down as KPCC chief

Bengaluru: DCM DK Shivakumar on Wednesday hinted at stepping down as Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president, but assured partymen that he would be in the "frontline leadership" of the party. "We need to give a chance to others. However, I will be there in the frontline leadership," he said | P4

MP OFFICER DIES DURING MAOIST ENCOUNTER

Inspector Ashish Sharma of the MP police's Hawk Force anti-Naxal unit died on Wednesday after being injuried in a gunfight Chhattisgarh-MAdhya Pradesh border | P12

SC quashes Tribunal law provisions

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Wednesday struck down several key provisions of the Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021 related to the appointment, tenure, and service conditions of tribunal members, noting that these were in violation of the court's earlier judgments, and directed the Centre to set up a National Tribunals Commission within four months.

In a strongly worded verdict, a bench of Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran said the Centre brought back the provisions earlier read down by the apex court with minor tweaks. "The impugned provisions violated the principles of separation of powers and judicial independence, and they should not have been brought back," the bench said.

It said until a new legislation is put in place to give effect to the court's order, the directions and principles laid down in its earlier judgments will govern all matters related to appointment, tenure and qualifications concerning tribunal members.

The CJI, who authored the 137-page judgement, specifically invalidated the provisions including Section 3, which mandated a minimum age of 50 years for appointment as a chairperson or member. The court held that this section excluded young and competent advocates and experts.

Sweeping machines to be rented at ₹613cr!

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

BRUSHING aside serious questions raised by the Opposition BJP and Janata Dal (Secular), the state government on Wednesday gave administrative approval for renting 46 mechanical road-sweeping machines for seven years at a whopping Rs 613 crore to clean roads in five municipal corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA).

The Opposition questioned the logic of paying huge sums for renting the machines that can be purchased for a fraction of that amount. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, however, dismissed the allegations made by JDS and BJP and dared them to lodge a complaint with Lokayukta if there is corruption in renting the machines.

He told the media that if there is corruption, JDS leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy and Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje should file a complaint with the Lokayukta. "We have moved forward with sweeper machine rentals after a thorough study. This is not a project which started now, but it is seven years old. We are ready for any investigation. The process is transparent," he said, responding to allegations.

BJP contended that as per the Union government's e-marketplace portal, each of those machines cost around Rs 2.5 crore, and if the government purchases 46 machines (as approved by the cabinet), the total cost would be around Rs 115 crore. CONTINUED ON: P7

OPPN SEES SCAM

In all, 59 machines will cover 1,688 km of roads. They will sweep and clean the arterial and sub-arterial where there is high-density traffic density. The decision was taken as there is a safety concern for pourakarmikas

GBA official

|| Jai Sri Gurudev ||
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